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HOW OUR 4-H CLUB IS SERVING THE COMMUNITY

A radio talk by Cora Mae Briggs, 4-H club girl, Seward, Nebraska, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, December 5, 1936, and broadcast by a network of 57 associate NBC radio stations.

In seven years 187 members representing 58 different families of my immediate community have finished their club projects 100% in 4-H clubs of which I have been privileged to serve as leader. Into each have gone new ideas and approved practices.

This has served to awaken in the community, a desire for better methods of living. Parents watching their children learn, are gaining knowledge with them and the entire neighborhood is progressive.

Through excellent cooperation of parents, many abilities of their children have been developed which might otherwise have remained hidden. Bashful children have learned to talk with ease, talking in public becomes a matter of course, parliamentary procedure becomes a second nature.

4-H forms a bond of friendly relationship among neighbors. After all, any activity such as 4-H which builds and develops an individual, strengthens a community. I wish to cite a few incidents I have witnessed in doing club work. 4-H members may usually be recognized in a group by their alertness and ability.

A mother whose daughter is a freshman in the High School Home Economics Class and a member of my Learning to Sew group, thanked me recently for interesting them in club work. She said, "I hadn't realized the good 4-H is doing us until today. The Home Economics class had their first sewing lesson recently. Jane had her dish towel hemmed before the rest had learned to hold their towels correctly. She had her apron pattern laid and the material cut, before the rest of the girls had figured out what each piece was. Jane even made an apron for me lately."

She admitted that had it not been for our club she wouldn't have realized that Jane could even handle a needle. It was because I, like hundreds of other leaders, has confidence that my members could learn to sew - that the Mothers thought of letting their daughters touch the sewing machine. In addition to acquiring some degree of manual skill, these girls have learned to select fabrics for quality and appropriateness. They learn to exercise good taste in color and pattern selection with the usual result of satisfaction that goes with the feeling that one is appropriately dressed.

The same is true in cooking and canning. A close relationship has sprung up between Mothers and daughters. New methods and recipes have been worked out together. Menus are more balanced, the family health is considered. More food is being canned, by the use of up-to-date methods - due to membership in 4-H.

The same is true with my boys and their fathers. New methods of live-stock feeding, breeding and care have been adopted. In our community, are quite a number of young men known as breeders of purebred livestock, and as good feeders. They learned how, and raised their foundation stock in club work.

One incident which I wish to cite occurred after a summer's work in a rope club. A man was putting up hay. The big hay rope broke. Weather was threatening. Something had to be done quickly. In desperation, he carelessly demanded of his 12 year old son what to do next. Calmly the boy responded, "We learned splicing in rope club. "Let's splice it." This was quickly done, and the father had gained a new respect for his son and 4-H club work.

County and state fairs have instituted 4-H classes. Each year new additions are being made to the premium lists and to the exhibition facilities. A 4-H cottage was erected in Seward County this year which is a great tribute to 4-H, club work. Families and relatives flock to the fair to see Jimmy show his calf, or Jane demonstrate. Fair attendance is boosted. Enter a fair grounds and you'll always find activity in the 4-H division. There is something doing which draws the crowd all the while. Were it not that fair officials recognize the good 4-H clubs are doing, Nebraska wouldn't possess the fine 4-H building which graces our state fair grounds. This is an evidence that 4-H helps make the fair.

Wild life conservation is an activity which my clubs have enjoyed during the past two years. This work deals with conservation of water through soil erosion prevention, forestry, windbreaks, and protecting plant and animal life.

Time doesn't permit further illustrations. In closing may I say that we leaders appreciate the cooperation and aid given by parents and agents, just as much as you appreciate what our clubs are doing for you.

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